

# *Diabetes Partners in Prevention Newsletter: A Publication of the Connecticut Department of Public Health*

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## Surveillance of Gestational Diabetes, Betty C. Jung, RN, MPH, CHES, CT Dept of Public Health Summer, 2008

Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is a public health issue with concerns for both the mother and the baby. In addition to the risks during delivery, it places both the mother and the baby at higher risk for later development of type 2 diabetes.

Recent developments include the May 2008 release of the multi-year Hyperglycemia and Adverse Pregnancy (HAPO) Study findings, and the U.S. Preventive Health Services Task Force update of its 2003 GDM screening guidelines. Diabetes professionals have expressed interest in learning more about gestational diabetes, which they are seeing more of in their practices.

In response to this concern, the Health Information Systems and Reporting Unit at the Department of Public Health (DPH) developed a Connecticut GDM fact sheet. Research for the fact sheet included analyzing Con-

necticut 2003-2006 birth record data to characterize GDM in Connecticut. The research revealed that the prevalence of GDM in Connecticut is 4.1%, and that most GDM births occur in the counties of Fairfield, Hartford and New Haven, similar to where most Connecticut births occur. Mothers with GDM tend to be older and more educated, and were found to be more likely to deliver by C-section compared with non-GDM mothers.

The factsheet will be available on the DPH web site shortly. DPH will begin developing a surveillance system to track GDM on an ongoing basis in Connecticut. For more information, see: the CT Diabetes Surveillance System webpage that can be reached by going to <http://www.ct.gov/dph>. On left menu item "Statistics and Research", choose "Disease & Injury Surveillance," and then "Diabetes".



Keeping Connecticut Healthy

[www.dph.state.ct.us](http://www.dph.state.ct.us)

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## Diabetes and Depression Program Offered, Cindy Kozak, RD, CDE, MPH, CT Dept of Public Health

On June 2 and 3, 2008 a diabetes and depression program was offered by the Diabetes Prevention and Control Program with funding from the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors. Over one hundred health care professionals and para-professionals attended these two programs which featured Julie Wagner, PhD of the UConn Health Center and Daren Anderson, MD, from CHC Inc. Dr Wagner focused on how diabetes and depression affects women and

minorities and Dr. Anderson concentrated on screening, diagnosis and treatment of depression, specifically in Community Health Centers.

The programs presented by these two speakers are posted on [www.ct.gov/dph](http://www.ct.gov/dph). Go to TRAINCT to create a (free) account then go to course search tab. Click on "search" then type in keyword "Diabetes." The two titles are: "Blood Sugar Blues" and "Diabetes and Depression- Finding Treatment Solutions."

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## CT Diabetes Prevention and Control Program Focuses on African American Issues. Cindy Kozak, RD, MPH, CDE, CT Dept of Public Health

Because diabetes disproportionately affects African Americans in Connecticut, Department of Public Health Diabetes Prevention and Control Program (DPCP) is focusing efforts geared to this population subgroup. Our data shows that 6.2% of Connecticut's adult population have diagnosed diabetes; however, the prevalence among Blacks is 10.0%. Another alarming statistic, this one from the CDC, is that 1 out of 3 African American children born in 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime.

The DPCP has been working with Concerned Citizens for Humanity and the African American Affairs Commission to develop a diabetes calendar for 2009 featuring messages on diabetes prevention and control with pictures to illustrate the points. These calendars will be distributed to churches, beauty salons and barbershops across the state.

Two other programs focusing on this population are the "Power to Prevent Diabetes for African Americans", which is a community curriculum and "The Debilitator" a DVD and discussion guide. The "Power to Prevent Diabetes" is now available from the National Diabetes Education Program. It can be used by small groups to teach African Americans with and at risk for diabetes how to make healthy lifestyle changes. Step by step lesson plans are included. To order a free copy of the "Power to Prevent" call 1-888-693-6337.

"The Debilitator" is a powerful film featuring an African American male with diabetes who is motivated to make significant lifestyle changes. The DVD comes with a discussion guide to lead a group. Copies of the film and discussion guide are available from [cindy.kozak@ct.gov](mailto:cindy.kozak@ct.gov) or 860-509-7737.

## Connecticut Optometric Association participates in ADA Expo, Mark Chasse, O.D.

Nine optometrists from the Connecticut Association of Optometrists (CAO) and five assistants conducted 83 eye health evaluations at the seventh Annual Diabetes Expo on April 19, 2008. The Diabetes Expo, which took place at the Connecticut Expo Center in Hartford, was sponsored by the American Diabetes Association (ADA). It drew over 3000 attendees. This is the seventh year CAO optometrists have conducted the evaluations.

The following tests were performed: visual acuity with auto refraction, computerized visual fields, retinal tomography (OCT) and direct ophthalmoscopy with retinal

photography.

The results of our evaluations are as follows: Eighty three patients were evaluated ranging in age from 13 to 77. There were 44 patients who had diabetes; 28 had type 2 diabetes and 16 had type 1. There were 9 referrals for comprehensive evaluations.

Editor's note: Mark Chasse was recently honored by the ADA at their Hall of Merit gala for his outstanding community service. He is the first Optometrist to be selected for this award.

## JDRF's Artificial Pancreas Project, Ellen Kellie, Special Events Coordinator, JDRF of North Central Connecticut and Western Massachusetts

The Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) has created the Artificial Pancreas Fund to support the development of multiple artificial pancreas technologies and make them a reality within years, rather than decades.

An artificial pancreas is a "closed-loop" device that would continuously measure the glucose levels in the body and dispense doses of insulin based on those measurements. It would maintain "normal" glucose levels by providing the right amount of insulin at the right time, just as a pancreas does in people without diabetes. An

artificial pancreas could be created by linking an insulin pump to a continuous glucose monitor.

JDRF has funded leading researchers to participate in the JDRF Artificial Pancreas Project, including two at Yale University with William V. Tamborlane, M.D., Director of the Children's Diabetes Program, and Stuart Weinzimer, M.D., Associate Professor of Pediatric Medicine. Yale researchers have successfully tested an artificial pancreas in a small group of teens with type 1 and further research is continuing.